

January 9, 2019

The January 9, 2019 meeting of the Mansfield Township Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chair Paul Tarlowe, held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1976, followed by a pledge of allegiance to the flag. Present were Paul Tarlowe, Robert Jewell, Glenn Todd, Marin Martin; also present were Township residents Don Proefrock, Mary Beth Mancuso and Michael Mancuso. Dawn Smith was excused.

Mr. Tarlowe introduced Marin Martin who was appointed to the Commission this month.

Minutes: It was MOVED by Mr. Todd to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2018 meeting, seconded by Mr. Jewell; all in favor.

Rockport Game Farm: Information about the Game Farm was posted on the Township website this morning and discussed issues of the past few years. Last year both chicks and heat in the brooder building produced difficulties along with diseases. The USDA recommends poultry operations adopt specific biosecurity measures; updated methods would impose budgetary constraints. The staff had been reduced to four positions. Fish and Wildlife will now purchase adult birds from a vendor in Pennsylvania. The Division seeks an "expression of interest" from anyone who might lease the site and utilize it agriculturally; the site cannot be developed for commercial operation, it must remain agriculturally productive. Interested parties can submit their ideas by February 26.

Rain Gardens: There are detention basins at the corner of Rt. 57 and Allen Road, another at the Kohl's store, and one at Allen Road. Mr. Tarlowe checked ownership of the properties then spoke with Gary Pohorely, a trustee at the Musconetcong Watershed Association who is investigating a grant for redesigning the basins. To qualify for Sustainable Jersey points, any rain garden must be on municipal property, not commercial property as these sites are. Commission members discussed a continued interest in rain gardens and municipally owned properties where they might be placed.

Ms. Martin has a deep love for bees, and she described the global population loss of bees in general. In particular, she learned about Mason bees that build nests of mud in naturally occurring cracks, such as in masonry, as they are not hive bees. Orchards are a great home for Mason bees, where they can build up a population and pollinate the orchard. Ms. Martin's hope is to educate families about Mason bees as Mansfield is a farming community, and she is hoping to reach out to the school, outreach projects and community involvement. Mr. Tarlowe suggested this as a project to make the Environmental Commission more visible. Ms. Martin will research further and address the issue in February.

Environmental Issues: Mr. Tarlowe reported he has not contacted Mansfield School again. Ms. Smith was not present, so no grant updates could be discussed. Mr. Jewell reported several closings have been conducted for homes at Meadows of Mansfield, people are moving in.

Year-End Report Topics:

Meadows at Mansfield

Master Plan review (Township Committee must approve and do ordinances as necessary; this is in the Township Committee's hands)

Mt. Bethel Church, ongoing project; working with Open Space Committee

Meeting dates for 2019: It was MOVED by Ms. Martin to conduct Environmental Commission business meetings on the second Thursday of the month with workshop meetings on the fourth Thursday of the month; seconded by Mr. Todd; all in favor.

It was MOVED by Mr. Todd to pay the ANJEC dues of \$350.00 for 2019, seconded by Mr. Jewell; all in favor.

Mr. Tarlowe reported information forwarded to the Township Clerk has been posted on the website explaining the Environmental Commission membership and duties.

Mr. Jewell reported sighting a bald eagle along Asbury-Anderson Road. Mr. Tarlowe has seen eagles at the Pequest Hatchery.

It was MOVED by Mr. Todd to adjourn at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth A. Pante